

OUTREMER 15

Studies in the Crusades and the Latin East

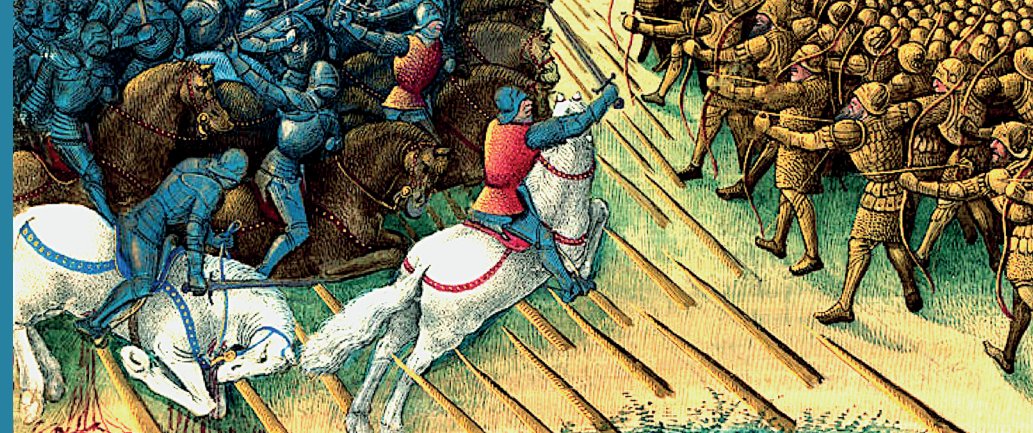
This volume focuses on the complex and often overlooked topic of crusading activities and the crusade movement on the fringes of Latin Christendom in the time frame from approximately 1300 to the beginning of the sixteenth century. It covers a period widely considered as a time of significant political, cultural and religious changes in Europe. A period in which Western Christianity was on the one hand still expanding (*vide* Lithuania and the western Rus and later the Spanish, Portuguese, French and English expansion in the Americas, Africa and South-East Asia) and on the other hand facing two mighty opponents: the Ottoman Empire and Muscovy. On its eastern and southeastern frontiers, Latin Christian expansion came to a gradual halt — here, the West was now largely under siege! Alone the political, logistical and ultimately also military feasibility of a large-scale crusade to liberate Jerusalem had now receded into a purely theoretical and practically almost unenforceable far distance. Ranging in scope from the Baltic Sea region to the Balkans and Iberia, this book's nineteen papers explore how these developments influenced the continuation and adaptation of crusading ideas and activities during this later period of crusades.

**Paul Srodecki** is a medievalist who has been working as an assistant and visiting professor, research fellow and lecturer at the universities of Giessen, Kiel and Flensburg (all three Germany), Ostrava (Czechia), Poznań (Poland) and Sønderborg (Denmark). He has published several treatises on alterity and alienity discourses, crusading on the frontiers of Latin Christendom as well as historical deconstruction.

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The Defence of the Faith



OUTREMER 15

# The Defence of the Faith

Crusading on the Frontiers  
of Latin Christendom  
in the Late Middle Ages

Edited by

**Paul Srodecki and Norbert Kersken**

BREPOLS

THE DEFENCE OF THE FAITH

# OUTREMER: STUDIES IN THE CRUSADES AND THE LATIN EAST

VOLUME 15

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# The Defence of the Faith

*Crusading on the Frontiers of Latin Christendom in the Late Middle Ages*

*edited by*

PAUL SRODECKI AND NORBERT KERSKEN

BREPOLS

Cover illustration: The battle of Nicopolis, 25 September 1396. Picture by Jean Colombe. Taken from Sébastien Mamerot, *Les passages faiz oultremer par les Roys de france et autres princes et seigneurs francois contre les turcs et autres sarrazins et mores oultre marins* (s.l., 1474), Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Département des Manuscrits, Fr. 5594, fol. 263v, available online at <https://w.wiki/3UAC> [accessed 23 November 2023], licence CCo 1.0 Universal.

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In memoriam  
Francis Michael IPGRAVE  
(1983–2023)

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## List of Abbreviations

AAV	Archivum Apostolicum Vaticanum (until October 2019 Archivum Secretum Vaticanum; RA = Registra Lateranensia; RS = Registra supplicum; RV = Registra Vaticana), Civitas Vaticana
AB	<i>Annales de Bourgogne</i> , ed. Henri Drouot et al., 86 vols (Dijon, 1929–)
ACA	Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Barcelona (RC = Registro de Cancillería)
ACC	<i>Acta concilii Constanciensis</i> , ed. Heinrich Finke, 4 vols (Münster i. W., 1896–1928)
<i>Acta Anni</i>	‘A leleszi konvent országos levéltárában lévő Acta anni sorozatának oklevelei’, ed. Norbert C. Tóth, 2 pts, 1 (1387–99): <i>A Nyíregyházi Jós András Múzeum évkönyve</i> 47 (2005), 235–344; 2 (1400–10): <i>A Nyíregyházi Jós András Múzeum évkönyve</i> 48 (2006), 323–442
<i>Acta Clem. VI</i>	<i>Acta Clementis PP. VI (1342–52) e regestis vaticanis aliisque fontibus collegit</i> , ed. Aloysius Tăutu, CCO 3/9 (Roma, 1960)
<i>Acta Inn. VI</i>	<i>Acta Innocentii PP. VI (1352–62) e regestis vaticanis aliisque fontibus collegit</i> , ed. Aloysius Tăutu, CCO 3/10 (Roma, 1961)
<i>Acta Urb. V</i>	<i>Acta Urbani PP. V (1362–70) e regestis vaticanis aliisque fontibus collegit</i> , ed. Aloysius Tăutu, CCO 3/11 (Roma, 1964)
AHC	<i>Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum</i> , ed. Walter Brandmüller et al., 50 vols (Paderborn, 1969–)
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional (OOMM = Órdenes militares), Madrid
ASPK	<i>Akta stanów Prus Królewskich</i> , ed. Karol Górski, Marian Biskup and Irena Janosz-Biskupowa, 8 vols (Toruń, 1955–93)
AT	<i>Acta Tomiciana: Epistolarum. Legationum. Responsorum. Actionum et rerum gestarum. Serenissimi principis Sigismundi primi regis Poloniae magni ducis Lithuaniae. Per Stanislaum Górski, canonicum Cracoviensem et Plocensem</i> , ed. Adam Tytus Działyński et al., 18 vols (Poznań, 1852–1999)
AV	<i>Analecta Vaticana 1202–1366</i> , ed. Jan Ptaśnik, MPV 3 (Kraków, 1914)
BAV	Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City
BF	<i>Bullarium Franciscanum</i> , ed. Giovanni Giacinto Sbaraglia, 11 vols in 2 sers (Roma, 1759–1990)
BGDO	<i>Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie</i> , ed. Kurt Forstreuter and Hans Koeppen, 4 vols (Göttingen, 1960–76)
BNM	Biblijoteka Nazzjonali ta’ Malta — The National Library of Malta (AOM = L-Arkivji tal-Ordni ta’ San Ġwann ta’ Ġerusalem, ta’ Rodi,



- u ta' Malta [The Archives of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta]], Valletta
- BP *Bullarium Poloniae*, ed. Irena Sulowska-Kuraś et al., 7 vols (Roma, 1982–2006)
- CCO Codificazione Canonica Orientale: Fonti (Fontes), 45 fascs and 15 vols in 3 srs (Roma, 1931–)
- CCR Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, 59 vols (London, 1892–1953)
- CDAC *Codex diplomaticus Arpadianus continuatus*, ed. Gusztáv Wenzel, 12 vols (Pest, 1860–70)
- CDCDS *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, ed. Tade Smičiklas, Jakov Stipišić and Miljen Šamšalović, 18 vols (Zagreb, 1904–98)
- CDEB *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris regni Bohemiae*, ed. Gustav Friedrich et al., 7 vols (Praha, 1904–)
- CDECDV *Codex diplomaticus ecclesiae cathedralis necnon dioeceseos Vlnensis*, ed. Jan Fijałek and Władysław Semkowicz, 1 vol. (Kraków, 1932–48)
- CDEM *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Moraviae*, ed. Anton Boczek, 15 vols (Olomouc, 1836–1903)
- CDH *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*, ed. György Fejér, 12 vols, 45 bks (Budae, 1829–66)
- CDM *Codex diplomaticus et commemorationum Masoviae generalis* [since vol. 2: *Codex diplomaticus Masoviae novus*, ed. Jan Karol Kochanowski, Irena Sulowska-Kuraś and Stanisław Kuraś, 3 vols (Warszawa, 1919–2000)]
- CDMP *Codex diplomaticus Maioris Poloniae*, ed. Ignacy Zakrzewski and Franciszek Piekosiński, 5 vols (Poznań, 1877–1990)
- CDPL *Codex diplomaticus Regni Poloniae et Magni Ducatus Lituaniae*, ed. Maciej Dogiel, 5 vols (Wilno, 1758–64)
- CDPM *Codex diplomaticus Poloniae Minoris*, ed. Franciszek Piekosiński, 4 vols (Kraków, 1876–1905)
- CDPr *Codex diplomaticus Prussicus: Urkunden-Sammlung zur ältern Geschichte Preussens aus dem Königl. Geheimen Archiv zu Königsberg nebst Regesten*, ed. Johannes Voigt, 6 vols (Königsberg, 1836–61)
- CDS *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte vom 14. Bis in's 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Karl von Hegel, 37 vols (Leipzig, 1862–1968)
- CESDQ *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, ed. August Sokolowski, Józef Szujski and Anatol Lewicki, 3 vols (Kraków, 1876–94)
- CEV *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi magni ducis Lithuaniae 1376–1430*, ed. Antoni Prochaska (Kraków, 1882)
- CGOH *Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem (1100–1310)*, ed. Joseph Delaville Le Roulx, 4 vols (Paris, 1894–1906)
- CLR *Calendar of the Liberate Rolls preserved in the Public Records Office, Henry III*, ed. Henry C. Maxwell Lyte, 6 vols (London, 1916–64)



CPR	Calendar of Patent Rolls: Preserved in the Public Record Office, 1232–1582, 72 vols (London, 1891–)
CRM	<i>Cahiers de recherches médiévales</i> (since 2010 <i>Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes</i> ), ed. Bernard Ribémont et al., 45 vols (Paris, 1996–)
Crusades	<i>Crusades: The Journal of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East</i> , ed. Jonathan Phillips et al., 22 vols (London, 2002–)
DD	<i>Diplomatarium Danicum</i> , ed. Aksel Emanuel Christensen et al., 40 vols in 3 sers (København, 1938–)
DIR	<i>Documente privitoare la istoria romanilor</i> , 30 vols in 2 sers, ed. Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki and Nicolae Densușianu (București, 1876–1942)
DIRC	<i>Documentos Internacionales de los Reyes Católicos</i> , Antonio de la Torre, 6 vols (Barcelona, 1949–66)
DP	<i>La documentación pontificia hasta Inocencio III</i> , ed. Demetrio Mansilla (Roma, 1955)
DPRHU	<i>Documenta Pontificum Romanorum Historiam Ucrainae illustrantia</i> (1075–1953), ed. Atanasii Velykii, 2 vols (Rome, 1953–54)
DRH	<i>Decreta Regni Hungariae 1301–1457</i> , ed. Franciscus Döry, Georgius Bónis and Vera Bácskai, 2 vols (Budapest, 1976–89)
DRMH	<i>Decreta regni Medievalis Hungariae: The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary</i> , ed. János M. Bak et al., 4 vols (Salt Lake City, 1989–2012)
DRRR	<i>Diplomatarium relationum reipublicae Ragusanae cum regno Hungariae</i> , ed. József Gelcich and Lajos Thallóczy (Budapest, 1887)
DRVM	ДРВМ — Древняя Русь. Вопросы медиевистики, ed. E. L. Konyavskaya, 93 vols (2000–)
EFE	<i>Elementa ad fontium editiones</i> , ed. Polski Instytut Historyczny w Rzymie, 76 vols (Romae, 1960–92)
EHR	<i>The English Historical Review</i> , ed. Mandell Creighton et al., 138 vols (Oxford, 1886–)
GStA PK	Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (HA = Hauptabteilung, OBA = Ordensbriefarchiv, OF = Ordensfolianten), Berlin
HC	<i>A History of the Crusades</i> , ed. Kenneth M. Setton, 6 vols (Madison, 1955–89)
HHFD	<i>Historiae Hungaricae Fontes Domestici</i> , ed. Flórián Mátyás, 4 vols (Leipzig, 1881–85)
IRR	<i>Itineraria regum et reginarum, 1382–1438</i> , ed. Pál Engel and Norbert C. Tóth (Budapest, 2005)
JBS	<i>Journal of Baltic Studies</i> (until 1971 <i>Bulletin of Baltic Studies</i> ), ed. Edgar Anderson et al., 54 vols (Uppsala, 1970–)
JGO	<i>Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas</i> (until 1934 <i>Jahrbücher für Kultur und Geschichte der Slaven</i> ; NF = Neue Folge), ed. Hans Übersberger et al., 70 vols (1925–)

<i>KH</i>	<i>Kwartalnik Historyczny</i> , ed. Franciszek Ksawery Liske et al., 130 vols (Lwów, 1887–)
<i>LAPM</i>	<i>Listy i akta Piotra Myszkowskiego, generalnego starosty ziem ruskich króla Jana Olbrachta</i> , ed. Anatol Lewicki (Kraków, 1898)
<i>LHS</i>	<i>Lithuanian Historical Studies</i> , ed. Lithuanian Institute of History, 26 vols (Leiden, 1996–)
<i>Lites</i>	<i>Lites ac res gestae inter Polonos Ordinemque Cruciferorum</i> , ed. Adam Tytus Działyński et al., 7 vols in 3 sers (Poznań, 1855–1970)
<i>LM</i>	<i>Lietuvos Metrika: Užrašymų knyga</i> , ed. Egidijus Banionis et al., 53 vols (Vilnius, 1993–)
<i>LMAVB RS</i>	Lietuvos Mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių bibliotekos Rankraščių skyrius, Vilnius
<i>LUB</i>	<i>Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten</i> , ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge et al., 17 vols in 2 sers (Reval, 1853–)
<i>MCG</i>	<i>Monumenta conciliorum generalium seculi decimi quinti : Concilium Basileense</i> , ed. František Palacký et al., 4 vols (Wien, 1857–1935)
<i>MGH</i>	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
<i>MGH DC</i>	MGH Deutsche Chroniken und andere Geschichtsbücher des Mittelalters, 6 vols (Hannover, 1877–1909)
<i>MGH SS</i>	<i>MGH Scriptores (in folio)</i> , ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz et al., 39 vols (Hannover, 1826–)
<i>MGH SRG</i>	MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi, 81 vols (Hannoverae, 1841–)
<i>MGH SRG n. s.</i>	MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, nova series, 25 vols (Berlin, 1922–)
<i>MHSM</i>	<i>Monumenta historica Slavorum Meridionalium</i> , ed. Vicentio Macuscev, 2 vols (Varsaviae, 1874–82)
<i>MIÖG</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung</i> , ed. Engelbert Mühlbacher et al., 131 vols (Wien, 1880–)
<i>MKL</i>	<i>Mátyás király levelei. Külügyi osztály / Mathiae Corvini Hungariae Regis epistolae exterae 1458–90</i> , ed. Vilmos Fraknói, 2 vols (Budapest, 1893–95 [reprint Budapest, 2008])
<i>MM</i>	<i>Micae Mediaevales: Fiatal történészek dolgozatai a középkori Magyarországról és Európáról</i> , Zsófia Kádár et al., 9 vols (Budapest, 2020–)
<i>MNL</i>	Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár (Diplomatikai Fényképgyűjtemény = DF, Diplomatikai Levéltár = DL)
<i>MPH</i>	<i>Monumenta Poloniae historica</i> , ed. August Bielowski et al., 6 vols (Lwów, 1864–93)
<i>MPH n. s.</i>	Monumenta Poloniae historica, nova series, 16 vols (Kraków, 1946–)
<i>MPV</i>	Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana, ed. Jan Ptaśnik et al., 10 vols (Kraków, 1913–2002)
<i>MVA</i>	<i>Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301–1457</i> , ed. Pál Engel, 2 vols (Budapest, 1996)



MVHH	<i>Monumenta Vaticana historiam Regni Hungariae illustrantia</i> , ed. Arnold Ipolyi et al., 9 vols in 2 sers (Budapest, 1884–1909)
MVRGB	<i>Monumenta Vaticana res gestas Bohemicas illustrantia</i> , ed. Ladislav Klicman et al., 8 vols (Praha, 1903–2003)
NPL	<i>Новгородская первая летопись старшего и младшего изводов</i> , ed. Arsenii N. Nasonov (Moskva, 1950)
OT	<i>Oklevelek Temesvármegye és Temesvárváros történetéhez</i> , ed. Frigyes Pesty et al., 2 vols (Pozsony, 1896–2014)
PCsL	<i>A Perényi család levéltára 1222–1526</i> , ed. István Tringli (Budapest, 2008)
PH	<i>Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego: Prace Historyczne</i> , Krzysztof Baczkowski et al., 149 vols (Kraków, 1955–)
PrzH	<i>Przegląd Historyczny</i> , ed. Jan Karol Kochanowski et al., 114 vols (Warszawa, 1905–)
PL	<i>Patrologia cursus completus: Series latina</i> , ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1844–64)
PLP	<i>Псковские летописи</i> , ed. Arsenii N. Nasonov, 2 vols (Moskva, 1941–55)
PSRL	<i>Полное собрание русских летописей</i> [Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei], ed., 43 vols (St. Petersburg, 1841–)
QMAN	<i>Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae</i> , ed. Wojciech Falkowski (Warszawa, 1994–)
RDBM	<i>Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae</i> , ed. Karel Jaromír Erben, Josef Emler and Bedrich Mendel, 8 vols (Prague, 1855–2017)
RESEE	<i>Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes</i> , ed. Victor Papacostea et al., 60 vols (București, 1963–)
RH	<i>Roczniki Historyczne</i> , ed. Kazimierz Tymieniecki et al., 88 vols (Poznań, 1925–)
RHC Occ.	<i>Recueil des historiens des croisades : Historiens occidentaux</i> , ed. L'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 5 vols (1844–95)
RHGF	<i>Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France</i> , ed. Martin Bouquet et al., 24 vols (Paris, 1738–1904 [the first 19 vols have been reprinted from 1869 to 1880])
RHP	<i>Regesta Honorii Papae III</i> , ed. Petrus Pressutti, 2 vols (Rome, 1888–95)
RL	<i>Rocznik Lituanistyczny</i> , ed. Urszula Augustyniak et al., 8 vols (Warszawa, 2015–)
RRH	<i>Regesta regni Hierosolymitani</i> , and <i>Additamentum</i> , ed. Reinhold Röhricht, 2 vols (Innsbruck, 1893–1904)
RS	<i>Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores</i> (Rolls Series), 253 vols (London, 1858–1911)
RTA	<i>Deutsche Reichstagsakten</i> (ÄR = Ältere Reihe, MR = Mittlere Reihe, JR = Jüngere Reihe), ed. Julius Weizsäcker et al., 58 vols, 102 bks (Gotha, 1867–)

SMHD	<i>Scriptores minores historiae danicae medii ævi</i> , ed. Martin Clarentius Gertz, 2 vols (København, 1917–20)
SOF	<i>Südost-Forschungen</i> , ed. Fritz Valjavec et al., 81 vols (München, 1936–)
SR	<i>Средневековая Русь</i> , ed. A. A. Gorsky et al., 14 vols (Moskva, 1996–)
SRH	<i>Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum</i> , ed. Imre Szentpétery, 2 vols (Budapest, 1937–38, repr. 1999)
SRP	<i>Scriptores rerum Prussicarum</i> , ed. Theodor Hirsch, Max Toeppen and Walther Hubatsch, 6 vols (Leipzig, 1861–1968)
SSDOP	<i>Die Staatsschriften des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen im 15. Jahrhundert</i> , Bd. 1: <i>Die Traktate vor dem Konstanzer Konzil (1414–18) über das Recht des Deutschen Ordens am Lande Preußen</i> , ed. Erich Weise (Göttingen, 1970)
SVDOP	<i>Die Staatsverträge des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen im 15. Jahrhundert</i> , ed. Erich Weise, 3 vols (Königsberg, 1939–70)
UBGH	<i>Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte des Hussitenkrieges vom Jahre 1419 an</i> , ed. Franz Palacký, 2 vols (Prag, 1872–73)
VMHH	<i>Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam Sacram illustrantia</i> , ed. Augustin Theiner, 2 vols (Romae, 1859–60)
VMPL	<i>Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia</i> , ed. Augustin Theiner, 4 vols (Roma, 1860–64)
VMSM	<i>Vetera monumenta Slavorum Meridionalium historiam illustrantia</i> , ed. Augustin Theiner, 2 vols (Romae, 1863–75)
VPUB	<i>Das virtuelle Preußische Urkundenbuch: Regesten und Texte zur Geschichte Preußens und des Deutschen Ordens</i> , ed. Jürgen Sarnowsky (Hamburg, 1999–), < <a href="https://t1p.de/fexj">https://t1p.de/fexj</a> > [accessed 18 May 2021]
VSMH	<i>Veterum scriptorum et monumentorum historicorum dogmatorum moralium amplissima collectio</i> , ed. Edmund Martene and Ursinus Durand, 9 vols (Parisiis, 1724–33 [repr. New York, 1968])
ZDM	<i>Zbiór dokumentów Małopolskich</i> , ed. Stanisław Kuraś and Irena Sułkowska-Kuraś, 8 vols (Wrocław, 1962–75)
ZfO	<i>Zeitschrift für Ostforschung</i> (since 1995 <i>Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung</i> ), ed. Hermann Aubin et al., 72 vols (Marburg, 1952–)
ZH	<i>Zapiski Historyczne</i> , ed. Towarzystwo Naukowe, 88 vols (Toruń, 1908–)
ZsO	<i>Zsigmondkori oklevéltár</i> , ed. Elemér Mályusz et al., 14 vols (Budapest, 1951–2020)



## A Note on Names

As general guidelines the chapters in this volume follow the *MHRA Style Guide* and the approach in *The Crusades: An Encyclopedia*. Where there are current anglicised equivalents for foreign personal names (especially with regard to monarchs ruling various realms in personal union), place-names and names of regions, we have decided to use these forms (e.g. *Alexander* for *Aleksandr/Aleksander/Aleksandras*, *Casimir* for *Kazimierz/Kazimieras*, *Cracow* for *Kraków*, *Hedwig* for *Jadwiga/Hedvig*, *Henry* for *Heinrich/Henryk/Jindřich*, *Kiev* for *Kyiv*, *Vladislas/Ladislas* for *Władysław/Vladislav/Ulászól/László*, *Louis* for *Ludwig/Lajos/Ljudevit/Ludwik* [and the quaint English form *Lewis*], *Vienna* for *Wien* etc.), but we have opted to avoid obsolete ones (e.g. *Alfonso* not *Alphons[e]*, *Frankfurt* not *Frankfort* etc.). This applies above all to individuals and toponyms belonging to the Latin West. However, especially with regard to the late Middle Ages, we have used the ‘native’ forms where there are first and last names handed down in the sources (e.g. *Đurađ Branković* instead of *George Branković*, *Jakub Świnka* instead of *Jacob Świnka*, *Mikołaj Lasocki* instead of *Nicholas Lasocki* etc.). This has also been done for literary figures and for any other persons who are habitually known by the foreign forms in scholarship as well as for all German ruling houses as the *Habsburgs* or the *Luxemburgs* (and not *Hapsburgs* or *Luxembourgs*), for whom the German forms were used. We also gave priority to historical place-names, i.e. those current and/or in use by the dominant local elites at the respective time (e.g. *Christburg* instead of *Dzierzgoń*, *Constantinople* instead of *Istanbul*, *Danzig* instead of *Gdańsk*, *Kholm* instead of *Chełm*, *Pressburg* instead of *Bratislava* etc.). Besides well-known historical cities such as Constantinople, in all cases where medieval names differ from modern forms the current location is provided in parentheses at the first mention in the respective chapter. In order to help readers, the various place and personal names have been cross-referenced in the index.

We have also decided to distinguish between *Rus* and *Russia*. Omitting the sometimes pedantically overused apostrophe — a transliteration of the Cyrillic soft sign — in the interest of improved readability, the former describes the loose federation of the East Slavic peoples with its centres in Kiev and Novgorod, whereas the latter denotes the early modern state, the tsardom of Russia, which developed from the grand principality of Moscow, and all its successor states (the Russian Empire, Soviet Russia and the Russian Federation). The names used in this book for the various East Slavic peoples inhabiting the Rus are *Rus* or rather *Ruthenian(s)*, the latter being derived from the contemporary Latin and being most accepted by Eastern European historians. It should be emphasised, however,

that the term *Ruthenian(s)* also changes conceptually through history and is largely used from the fifteenth century onwards, and above all in the early modern period, to distinguish the East Slavic population of the Polono-Lithuanian commonwealth from the so-called Moscovite Rus and later Russia.

The debate surrounding the terms *Mongols* or *Tatars* is also a relatively long-standing one in Medieval Studies, especially among historians of East-Central and Eastern Europe, and can certainly only be resolved with great difficulty in a single publication, the focus of which is predominantly on other issues. Following the principles of the so-called *Begriffsgeschichte*, we have decided to differentiate the terms depending on what time the source written. While the term *Mongol(s)* is used almost exclusively for the Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century, the etymological double pair *Mongol(s)/Tatar(s)* is used for issues that extend into the fourteenth century. From the breakup of the Golden Horde in the fifteenth century, the term *Tatar(s)* is used exclusively for the successor khanates.



## Preface and Acknowledgements

If a survey were to be held today to find out what is meant by a crusade, the answer which would probably be given most frequently is that it refers to the wars of the Latin Christians of the high Middle Ages in the Holy Land. The extent to which this traditional depiction is still widespread among the general public is shown by countless popular or rather pseudo-scientific publications on the subject (whether in print or as TV productions), which reduce the crusade phenomenon of the Middle Ages solely to the conflict ‘between Orient and Occident, between Christianity and Islam’, as postulated by the short documentary *Kreuzzüge* produced some years ago by the German public television station ZDF.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the various popular-scientific publications and television productions, most of which have been compiled in a rather superficial and very fragmentary manner, serve to further disseminate and cement this simplified image. However, for medieval contemporaries, the term crusade (or better: the various Latin crusading terms such as *cruciata*, *expeditio*, *iter*, *via*, *peregrinatio*, *profectio* or *passagium*, as well as their respective national language equivalents), had a much broader range than the description of the military campaigns for the protection or rather the reconquest of Christianity’s sacred sites in the Holy Land. Using the crusade as justification, the popes also legitimised numerous armed endeavours outside the Levant. With only a few exceptions, the latter campaigns only received limited attention in Western studies from the beginning of modern historiography in the nineteenth until well into the twentieth centuries. In the past two to three decades, however, new and very fruitful insights have been made into the crusading movement on the fringes of Latin Christendom.

Against this background, the international conference *Crusading and the Crusader Movement in the Peripheries of the Christian West, 1100–1500*, held in Marburg, Germany, on 5–7 October 2017, aimed to trace the manifold manifestations of the peripheral crusades in a comparative perspective spanning the entire European region and (with North Africa) even beyond. At this point we would like once again to thank all the participants who contributed to the fruitful output of the conference through their lectures, as moderators or by participating in the lively discussions. Special thanks are due to the *Herder Institute for Historical Research on East-Central Europe* in Marburg for providing the conference facilities and for the organisational support for the conference.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Kreuzzüge’, in ZDF Kultur — *God’s Cloud*, 6 November 2014 <<https://t1p.de/qw82>> [accessed 5 May 2020].



The positive feedback, both from participants and the audience, as well as the stimulating reviews<sup>2</sup> and expressions of interest from those who were unable to attend the conference due to time constraints, encouraged both of us in our plans to make the respective lectures available to the wider public in the form of an anthology. The breadth of the topics, both in terms of time and space, led us to the decision to publish two volumes, which — supplemented by additional essays — are intended to shed light on the problems of the peripheral crusades. We decided on a temporal division into one volume on the high Middle Ages and one on the late Middle Ages. The present volume offers a comparative approach to the crusade movement on the fringes of Latin Christendom in the time frame from approximately 1300 to the beginning of the sixteenth century, bringing a regional focus to research on these peripheral phenomena. It covers a period widely considered as a time of change and transition. A period in which Western Christianity was on the one hand still on expansion (*vide* Lithuania and the western Rus and later the Spanish, Portuguese, French and English expansion in the Americas, Africa and South-East Asia) and on the other hand had to face two mighty opponents on its most eastern and south-eastern borders: the Ottoman Empire and Muscovy. The book features several key questions: Which military campaigns were propagated as crusades on the peripheries of the Christian West? What efforts were made to gain recognition for them as crusades and what effects did these have? What value did the crusade movement have for societies at the *fines christianitatis*? What role did the armed pilgrimages have in strengthening a pan-Western sense of togetherness and solidarity, and what role did they have in the creation of a crusader and frontier identity? The nineteen papers, ranging in scope from the southern and eastern Baltic regions to Iberia and Italy, Western and Central Europe to the Balkans, provide new insights into the ways in which crusade rhetoric was reflected in the culture and literature of countries involved in late medieval crusading.

During the completion of the present volume, we received suggestions, advice and support from numerous people from the academic community, for which we would all like to express our sincere thanks. In addition to the aforementioned Herder Institute in Marburg, we would also like to thank the Christian-Albrechts-University Foundation as well as the Fritz Thyssen Foundation for their financial support of the conference and thus, ultimately, for making this book project possible. We are also very grateful to Annelie Thom of the Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel for her tireless and conscientious checking of the footnotes and her contribution to the compilation of the register. For his inclusion of the volume in the *Outremer* series, we would like to thank the general editor Alan Murray

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2 See, for instance, the review of the conference published on H-Soz.Kult by Robert Friedrich (German Historical Institute Paris) on 26 February 2018: 'Tagungsbericht: Crusading and the Crusader Movement on the Peripheries of the Christian West 1100–1500, 05.10.2017–07.10.2017 Marburg', *H-Soz-Kult*, 26 February 2018, <[www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-7573](http://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-7573)> [accessed 5 May 2020].



(University of Leeds), who has always constructively shared with us valuable tips and critical advice. The editors would also like to thank Brepols Publishers, and in particular Chris VandenBorre and Eva Anagnostaki, for taking the final steps towards publication.

Last, we would like to pay our heartfelt gratitude and our deepest respects to our beloved colleague and friend, Francis Michael Ipgrave. Francis passed away far too early after a sudden and severe illness in November 2023. It was his thorough proofreading of the English-language contributions that made both volumes possible. This book is dedicated to him.

Paul Srodecki and Norbert Kersken, February 2024

# Lithuanian Participation in the Crusading Movement in the Long Fifteenth Century

Kenneth Setton's monumental edition of *A History of the Crusades* represents the most comprehensive treatment of the crusades, from their inception to their zenith, final demise and legacy.<sup>1</sup> However, it contains no evidence to suggest that medieval Lithuanians may also be viewed as crusaders of a sort. This is quite understandable. For almost two centuries, it was the pagan Lithuanians who were on the receiving end of crusading activities in North-Eastern Europe. By the time of their conversion to Roman Catholicism in the late fourteenth century, the best days of crusading were well over, and Lithuanians seem to have missed the golden opportunity to sport their crusading credentials, as many other European nations had done at one time or another. However, this is not the whole story. A sustained interest in the phenomenon of the late crusades, and a closer look at what the first Christian Lithuanian rulers said and wrote, and what courses of action they took, allow us to advance the thesis that, following their conversion, the Lithuanians were not left beyond the pale of the pan-European enterprise that was the crusades, despite their fairly late entry to the most respectable club of proud European Catholic nations.<sup>2</sup> In a word, they were not merely victims of the

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- 1 *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Kenneth M. Setton, 6 vols (Madison, 1969–89). The best single monograph dealing with the Northern crusades remains Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525*, (London, 1980 [2nd edn 1997]). The war of the Teutonic Order against the Baltic pagans has been covered by William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade* (DeKalb, 1975); Urban, *The Livonian Crusade* (Washington, 1981); Urban, *The Prussian Crusade* (Chicago, 2000); Anti Selart, *Livonia, Rus' and the Baltic Crusades in the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Fiona Robb (Boston, 2015). To date, the results of international cooperation on the Northern crusades are most readily available in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001); *The Clash of Cultures in the Medieval Baltic Frontier*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Farnham, 2009); *The North-Eastern Frontiers of Medieval Europe: The Expansion of Latin Christendom in the Baltic Lands*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Farnham, 2014). On all these issues, see also the various chapters in the most recently published selected work *The Expansion of the Faith: Crusading on the Frontiers of Latin Christendom in the High Middle Ages*, ed. Paul Srodecki and Norbert Kersken (Turnhout, 2021).
  - 2 Besides the introductory chapter in this volume, the recent historiography of fifteenth-century crusading is also discussed in Norman Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman Threat, 1453–1505*

*The Defence of the Faith*, Outremer: Studies in the Crusades and the Latin East, 15 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2024), pp. 155–170

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crusades,<sup>3</sup> for some time they were also participants in the movement.<sup>4</sup> Further research is needed in order to fill out the full picture of Lithuanian participation in the crusading movement, and this chapter provides one more step in this direction.

The most promising avenue for this kind of research has been opened up by the pluralistic school of thought in the study of crusades, as represented by Jonathan Riley-Smith, Norman Housley, Alan V. Murray, and others.<sup>5</sup> This approach provides us with a flexibility that is most necessary in an attempt to capture the phenomenon of crusades in all its variegated manifestations and on virtually every front of medieval Christendom. As far as is reasonably possible, it enables us to understand medieval men on their own terms. As a point of departure, therefore, I take a view current in medieval Prussia and Livonia that the crusades were a spiritually meritorious form of warfare directed against the enemies of the Church, a war that could be equally well employed both in the defence of the Church and in the expansion of Christian dominions.<sup>6</sup> With regards to medieval Lithuanians, one may safely assume that, following their conversion to Christianity, their elite felt quite at home within the late medieval world, permeated as it was with chivalric practices and crusading ideals.<sup>7</sup> This change, however, was not as abrupt as the theological opposition between pagan and Christian would have us believe, nor as deep as the received wisdom on a chasm between enemy and friend would imply.

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(Oxford, 2013). See also *Reconfiguring the Fifteenth-Century Crusade*, ed. Housley (London, 2017); *The Crusade in the Fifteenth Century: Converging and Competing Cultures*, ed. Housley (New York, 2017).

3 William Urban, 'Victims of the Baltic Crusade', *JBS* 29 (1998), 195–212.

4 Stephen C. Rowell, 'Lietuva — krikščionybės pylimas?: Vienos XV a. ideologijos pasisavinimas', in *Europos idėja Lietuvoje: Istorija ir dabartis*, ed. Darius Staliūnas (Vilnius, 2002), pp. 17–32; Stephen C. Rowell, 'Naujieji kryžiaus žygiuotojai: LDK ir Bizantijos santykiai XIV–XV a. sandūroje: Ar Vytautas Didysis buvo Lietuvos kryžiaus žygių prieš turkus bei totorius pradininkas?', in *Kryžiaus karų epocha Baltijos regiono tautų istorinėje sąmonėje*, ed. Rita R. Trimonienė and Robertas Jurgaitis (Šiauliai, 2007), pp. 181–205; Rita R. Trimonienė, 'Kryžiaus karų idėja XV a. II pusėje ir Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė', in *Kryžiaus*, pp. 223–34; Darius Baronas, 'Byzantium and Lithuania: North and South look at each other', in *Byzantium, New Peoples, New Powers: The Byzantino-Slav Contact Zone, from the Ninth to the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Milijana Kaimakamova et al. (Kraków, 2007), pp. 310–17.

5 Different approaches are discussed by Norman Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 2–13.

6 Axel Ehlers, *Die Ablasspraxis des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter* (Marburg, 2007), pp. 54–59.

7 Darius Baronas and Stephen C. Rowell, *The Conversion of Lithuania: From Pagan Barbarians to Late Medieval Christians* (Vilnius, 2015).

## Pagan-Christian Interface

Therefore, it is advantageous to turn our attention to the pagan-Christian interface at the time when the *Litauerreisen* were at their most intense.<sup>8</sup> The Teutonic Order provided opportunities for Western European nobles to display their Christian virtues and chivalric way of life in the fight against the 'Saracens' of the North.<sup>9</sup> These 'Saracens' proved to be a tough nut to crack, and it was therefore almost inevitable that certain peaceful modes of communication would arise. The most usual means of communication was to conduct negotiations over the exchange of prisoners of war, and these became quite frequent from the second half of the fourteenth century on.<sup>10</sup> Such negotiations must have involved some informal talk about the period of time when martial activities were supposed to come to a standstill.<sup>11</sup> It is no accident that the pagan Lithuanian prince who communicated most actively was Duke Kęstutis of Trakai (grand duke of Lithuania in 1381–82), the man who was in charge of relations with Lithuania's western neighbours. He and the Teutonic Knights had personal conversations on at least six occasions and, thanks to such contacts, he seems to have picked up a smattering of German.<sup>12</sup> In exceptional cases he managed to enter into personal relations with some of his adversaries. The prime example in this regard is supplied by the commander of Brandenburg (mod. Ushakovo), Gunter of Hohenstein, who acted as godfather to Danutė when her father Kęstutis handed her in marriage to Duke Janusz I of Masovia.<sup>13</sup>

The *Litauerreisen* did not constitute an all-out war of destruction and annihilation. The continuation of business as usual in the background may be exemplified by making reference to the trade treaties concluded between Lithuanian and Livonian authorities in 1338 and 1367.<sup>14</sup> The parties sought to ensure that their

8 Werner Paravicini, *Die Preussenreisen des europäischen Adels*, 4 vols (Sigmaringen, 1989–2023).

9 Paravicini, *Preussenreisen* 3; Alan V. Murray, 'The Saracens of the Baltic: Pagan and Christian Lithuanians in the Perception of English and French Crusaders to Late Medieval Prussia', *JBS* 41 (2010), 413–29; Loïc Chollet, *Les Sarrazins du Nord: Une histoire de la croisade balte par la littérature (XIIe–XVe siècle)* (Neuchâtel, 2019).

10 Sven Ekdahl, 'The Treatment of Prisoners of War during the Fighting between the Teutonic Order and Lithuania', in *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, ed. Malcolm Barber (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 263–69; Alvydas Nikžentaitis, 'Belaisviai Lietuvoje ir Vokiečių Ordino valstybėje (1283–1409)', in *Lietuvos valstybė XII–XVIII a.*, ed. Zigmantas Kiaupa et al. (Vilnius, 1997), pp. 507–27; Antanas Petrilionis, 'Belaisviai Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės ir Vokiečių ordino karuose (XIV–XV amžiai)' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Vilnius University, 2022).

11 *Kodex dyplomatyczny Litwy*, ed. Edward Raczyński (Wrocław, 1845), p. 69.

12 Darius Baronas, 'Lietuvių ir vokiečių taikaus bendravimo bruožai XIV a. karo sūkurėje', *Lituanistica* 56 (2010), 7–9.

13 Jan Tęgowski, *Pierwsze pokolenia Giedyminowiczów* (Poznań, 1999), p. 218; Rimvydas Petrauskas, 'Litauen und der Deutsche Orden: Vom Feind zum Verbündeten', in *Tannenberg-Grunwald-Žalgiris 1410: Krieg und Frieden im späten Mittelalter*, ed. Werner Paravicini, Rimvydas Petrauskas and Grisca Vercamer (Wiesbaden, 2012), pp. 238–40.

14 *Chartularium Lithuaniae res gestas magni ducis Gedeminne illustrans = Gedimino laiškai*, ed.

Stephen C. Rowell (Vilnius, 2003), pp. 258–60; *LUB* 1/2, no. 1041, cols 772–73; Rasa Mažeika,





Fig. 13. Seal of Duke Kęstutis of Trakai from 1379. Courtesy of Edmundas Rimša.

merchants could carry on with trading even in the thick of military activities. To achieve this on the Riga–Vilnius route was not plain sailing, and brigands roaming far and wide presented a nuisance to merchants from both sides. In order to contain the brigands within certain limits, both the Lithuanian and Livonian authorities took it upon themselves to ensure safe-conduct all the way to Vilnius or Riga, but no wider than one could throw a spear. One step further afield and a merchant could be killed or spoiled of his goods without provoking any legal repercussions. What is important to note is that the Teutonic Knights took care to ensure good be-

haviour on the part of ‘their’ brigands in territories deep into Lithuania, while Lithuanian nobles must have been authorised to look after ‘their’ brigands almost to the outskirts of Riga.<sup>15</sup>

Military confrontation with Western crusaders, raids, spying, and occasional peaceful contacts with the Teutonic Knights not only facilitated the flow of military know-how in both directions, but also brought the modes of knightly self-expression closer to the hearts of Lithuanian nobles.<sup>16</sup> It also needs to be admitted that pagans constituted an exotic thing for Western European nobles, evoking in them a blend of emotions ranging from hatred and disdain to interest and respect. The joy of taking part in the indiscriminate killing of the pagans, the desire to obtain slaves of pagan origin, the curiosity of paying a visit to a pagan prince — all these strands come together to form a multi-faceted picture of pagan-Christian relations and contacts at the height of the *Litauerreisen*.<sup>17</sup> The experience of this

‘Of Cabbages and Knights: Trade and Trade Treaties with the Infidel on the Northern Frontier, 1200–1390’, *Journal of Medieval History* 20 (1994), 71–76.

15 Darius Baronas, ‘Działalność paramilitarnych band rozbójniczych na pograniczu krzyżacko-litewskim w XIV wieku’, *RL* 1 (2015), 7–17.

16 Darius Baronas, ‘Der Kontext der litauischen Kriegskunst des 13. Jahrhunderts und die militärischen Innovationen von der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts bis zum Beginn des 15. Jahrhunderts’, in *Tannenberg-Grunwald-Žalgiris 1410*, pp. 159–73; Rimvydas Petrauskas, ‘Knighthood in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the Late Fourteenth to the Early Sixteenth Centuries’, *LHS* 11 (2006), 39–66. On early Lithuanian heraldry, see Władysław Semkowicz, ‘Braterstwo szlachty polskiej z bojarstwem litewskim w unji horodelskiej 1413 roku’, in *Polska i Litwa w dziejowym stosunku*, ed. Wojciech Baranowski (Kraków, 1914), p. 414; Edmundas Rimša, *Heraldry: Past to Present*, trans. Vijolė Arbas (Vilnius, 2005), pp. 58–76 and 119–21.

17 Peter Suchenwirts *Werke aus dem vierzehnten Jahrhundert: Ein Beytrag zur Zeit- und Sittengeschichte*, ed. Alois Primisser (Vienna, 1827), lns 257–62: *In ein lant, daz haist Sameyt, / Da vand man einew*

pagan-Christian interface was not lost on the first generation of Lithuania's Christian rulers. In order to denounce the grand master of the Teutonic Order in the eyes of King Sigismund of Hungary, Vladislas II Jogaila found it opportune to recall that, even in his pagan days, he had not been exposed to such nasty behaviour at the hands of the Teutonic Knights as was the case now he had become king of Poland.<sup>18</sup>

Even though relations between the Teutonic Order and their pagan Lithuanian adversaries were the most intense, they were far from being the only ones. Poland was another East-Central European polity whose rulers assumed the role of defenders of the faith and sought to stylise their realm as the shield or bulwark of Christendom, exposed as it was to continual attacks from Mongols/Tatars, Ruthenians, and Lithuanians.<sup>19</sup> These enemies had to be dealt with by making recourse to crusading for the sake of extending the limits of the Christian faith. This drama was played out most intensively in the lands of Volhynia, Galicia and Podolia, where Polish, Hungarian, Mongol/Tatar, and Lithuanian interests intersected.<sup>20</sup> It was also in the region of Podolia that the first Lithuanian crusader was produced — Duke Alexander Karijotaitis. After consolidating his power there, he became ever more assertive vis-à-vis the Mongols/Tatars. In 1378, Pope Gregory XI granted him full remission of sins as he was about to launch a campaign against the Golden Horde in defence, as he believed, of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>21</sup> Fighting them, he died sometime around 1380.<sup>22</sup> In his capacity as crusader, Duke Alexander was exceptional among his Lithuanian kith and kin, but as far as the other general qualities of a Christian prince are concerned, he falls in line with his brothers George, Boris, Constantine, Theodore and Basil. Based in Podolia, these Karijotid princes entered into close relations with their Hungarian and Polish neighbours and became either Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox Christians. In a sense, they may be regarded as harbingers of what was to come in the wake of the conversion of Grand Duke Jogaila and his accession to the Polish throne. Poland proved to be the main vehicle for the establishment of a Roman Catholic church organisation in Lithuania, but it was the Teutonic Order, however, whose initial impact was most decisive in forming the more militant Christian attitudes among the Lithuanians.

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*hochtzeit; / Di gest chomen ungepeten! / Ein tantz mit haiden wart getreten, / Daz ir wol sechtzig bliben tot; / Dar nach daz dorf mit vewr rot; Paravicini, Preussenreisen 2: 105–10; Petrauskas, 'Litauen', p. 241.*

18 CEV, no. 713, p. 376.

19 Paul Srodecki, *Antemurale Christianitatis: Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit* (Husum, 2015), pp. 110–11.

20 On the Frontier of Latin Europe: *Integration and Segregation in Red Ruthenia, 1350–1600*, ed. Thomas Wünsch and Andrzej Janeczek (Warsaw, 2004); Sven Jaros, *Iterationen im Grenzraum: Akteure und Felder multikonfessioneller Herrschaftsaushandlung in Kronruthenien (1340–1434)* (Berlin, 2021).

21 VMPL 1, no. 1015, pp. 748–49.

22 Baronas and Rowell, *The Conversion*, pp. 238–40.



## Teutonic Knights' Tutorial for Lithuanian Princes

Relations between the Teutonic Order and the Lithuanian dukes became significantly more diversified and intense following the accession of Jogaila to the grand ducal throne in 1377. A sign of the times is the series of treaties concluded between the Teutonic Order and the Lithuanian rulers from 1379 on.<sup>23</sup> Their formulaic expressions reveal the influence of the Teutonic Order's chancery and, taken on their own, they may seem to have nothing to do with crusading ideology. However, we need to look at them in closer detail. Grand Master Conrad Zöllner of Rotenstein's promise, made in 1384, to support Prince Vytautas against the enemies of the Christian religion, stands in stark contrast to earlier documents.<sup>24</sup> The fight for the recovery of the patrimony of Vytautas could thus be presented as some sort of struggle on behalf of Christianity, even if the object was so mundane, and the enemies, Grand Duke Jogaila and Duke Skirgaila, could only be portrayed as enemies of the Christian faith by means of a very loose interpretation. That such a view had little to do with the actual adherence to paganism or Christianity is clear from the fact that Vytautas' brother Sigismund was still technically pagan, but was evidently not considered to be an enemy of Christianity.<sup>25</sup> Opprobrium could be heaped on somebody depending on the political circumstances and the intended audience. The Teutonic Order's habit of depicting its adversaries as enemies of the Church and Christianity had a long pedigree.<sup>26</sup> The Knights and their guests taking part in the so-called *Litauerreisen* believed this to be true.<sup>27</sup> It was a one-size-fits-all means of attracting support for a noble cause. The first Lithuanian prince who picked up this ideological weapon was none other than Vytautas himself. This is not to say that Vytautas or his kin, the Lithuanian grand ducal family, were novices requiring instruction in the ways of late medieval realpolitik from their Teutonic masters. However, it is my contention that the very idiom of deciding who was on the right side and who was on the wrong was borrowed and internalised initially as a result of their dealings with the Teutonic Order. Lithuanian dukes were quite adroit in exploiting the divide between Christian and non-Christian for their own ends. When, in 1402, in a bid to undo the power of Vytautas, the regular troublemaker prince Švitrigaila and his Teutonic allies

23 The treaty of 29 September 1379: *CDP* 3, no. 134, pp. 180–82; the treaty of 31 May 1380: *LUB* 1/3, no. 1153, cols 362–63; the three treaties concluded at Dubysa on 31 October 1382: *LUB* 1/3, no. 1185, cols 394–95. For a detailed analysis of these, see Oleg Litskevich, 'Орденовский экземпляр договора о четырехлетнем перемирии и военной помощи между Великим Княжеством Литовским и Тевтонским Орденом (31 октября 1382 г.)', *Istorijos Šaltinių Tyrimai* 5 (2014), 215–32; Sergey V. Polekhov, 'Układ litewsko-krzyżacki o odstąpieniu Żmudzi z 1382 roku — kwestia autentyczności tekstu', *RL* 8 (2022), 7–25.

24 *CEV*, no. 15, p. 5.

25 *CEV*, no. 16, pp. 5–6.

26 Marcus Wüst, *Studien zum Selbstverständnis des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter* (Weimar, 2013), pp. 82–83, 276–77.

27 Loïc Chollet, *Les Sarrasins du Nord*, pp. 60–71, 114–21, 199–214.



launched deep raids into newly-converted Lithuania, their avowed promise not to attack Christian lands posed no real problems since it was up to them to decide where the line between true and false Christians ran.<sup>28</sup> One and the same person could be described in starkly contrasting terms, but this did not make him or her a pariah. The best example of this is Vytautas's daughter Sophia, who had been given in marriage to the Muscovite prince Vasily back in 1391.<sup>29</sup> In a general appeal addressed to a Roman Catholic audience in 1409, Polish king Vladislas II Jogaila depicted her as the 'most cruel hater' of the Roman Catholic faith, filled with rage even against her own parents.<sup>30</sup> This about-face was attributed to the Teutonic Knights who were given credit for engineering this marriage in order to have a schismatic Muscovy as an ally in an attempt to suppress the Catholic faith. Four years later, however, in the legal battle against the Teutonic Order, the good offices of this same Sophia were most welcome to both Jogaila and Vytautas.<sup>31</sup> It must be stressed that high-flown rhetorical devices stressing stark opposition between a true and a false religion were most frequently employed by the royal or grand ducal chancery in their correspondence with Western powers. The situation on the ground was much more diverse and dependent on ever changing pattern of relations between all the sides concerned.

The fight against the infidel Ottoman Turks and Mongols/Tatars of the Golden Horde was one of the earliest tasks presented to the newly-converted Lithuanian rulers by their Roman Catholic spiritual masters and allies.<sup>32</sup> In view of Lithuania's traditionally deep involvement in Rus and Mongol/Tatar-related affairs, Vytautas did not need much prompting to act.<sup>33</sup> Having made good his claims to grand ducal power in 1392, Vytautas was proving time and again that he was up to the task, even in the far-away steppes. In 1397 and 1398, he led victorious campaigns to the shores of the Black Sea, capturing and resettling the

28 CEV, no. 249, p. 82.

29 Jarosław Nikodem, *Witold wielki książę litewski (1354 lub 1355–27 października 1430)* (Kraków, 2013), pp. 119–20, 136.

30 CEV, no. 425, p. 196.

31 GStA PK, XX. HA, OF 7, pp. 64, 200–1. See also *Lites* 2/2, no. 29, p. 83 (28 January 1413). For more detail on these negotiations, see Wiesław Sieradzan, *Misja Benedykta Makraia w latach 1412–13: Z dziejów pokojowych metod rozwiązywania konfliktów między państwowych w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej* (Malbork, 2009), pp. 55–78; Adam Szweda, 'Zakon Krzyżacki wobec Polski i Litwy w latach 1411–1414', *PH* 141 (2014), 538–42.

32 At the request of Jogaila, Pope Urban VI granted remission of sins to those who would take part in the fight against the Ottomans and Tatars, 1 April 1388: CESDQ 2, no. 13, p. 17.

33 On Tataro-Lithuanian relations, see Darius Baronas, 'The Lithuanians and the Tatars: Confrontation from a Safe Distance and Vested Interests in the Common Ground', in *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols and Central-Eastern Europe: Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations*, ed. Alexander V. Maiorov and Roman Hautala (London, 2021), pp. 311–20; Vladyslav Gulevych, 'Expansion of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Middle and the Second Half of the Fourteenth Century and Its Relations with the Horde', in *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols*, pp. 340–67; Gulevych, 'The Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Kingdom of Poland, and the Tatar World in the Fifteenth Century', in *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols*, pp. 368–88.



Tatar prisoners of war on Lithuanian soil. The best proof that these campaigns were linked to crusading ideology was the castle built in 1398 on the lower reaches of the River Dnieper and given the aptly chosen name of St John.<sup>34</sup> To extend his clout and stabilise his rule over Kiev, Vytautas had to come to terms with the Teutonic Order. A mutual desire for cooperation was in the air, as may be inferred from the fact that a number of Teutonic Knights joined Vytautas in his campaigns of 1397 and 1398. The prospect of availing themselves of prisoners of war was not lost on them. It is therefore not by chance that there is a clause in the 1398 Treaty of Salinas (Ger. Salinwerder) which stipulates that both sides should enjoy equal rights over their prospective prisoners of war.<sup>35</sup> However mundane such struggles may appear, they had to be clad in the garb of a righteous war. To find yourself on the right side brought not only a sense of self-satisfaction, it also meant getting involved in the difficult task of spreading the Christian faith. This phrase was still relevant to the politics of the day — the Teutonic Order took much care to have this clause inscribed in the Treaty of Salinwerder.<sup>36</sup> After much talk and preparation Vytautas led an international host under the sign of the cross, only to suffer a debacle on the banks of the River Vorskla.<sup>37</sup> The best proof that this campaign was connected with crusading ideology is to be seen in the indulgence granted by Pope Boniface IX, albeit too late to make a difference, to the international Christian army, supplemented by Tatars allied to Vytautas who, this time, happened to be on the right side, if not the winning one.<sup>38</sup>

## Lithuanian Neophytes Come of Age

The defeat at Vorskla was a bitter blow for Vytautas, and one from which he drew his lesson by becoming less rash and more circumspect. It is therefore not surprising that, in dealing with their own Orthodox subjects, Lithuanian rulers avoided the use of harsh language that might alienate them — circumspection was advisable. However, where matters related to international politics and substantial gains seemed to be within easy reach, a crusade-style idiom could still

<sup>34</sup> Johann von Posilge, 'Chronik des Landes Preussen', ed. Ernst Strehlke, in *SRP* 3: 79–388 (here 222).

<sup>35</sup> *SVDOP* 2: 11; Klaus Neitmann, *Die Staatsverträge des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen 1230–1449: Studien zur Diplomatie eines spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Territorialstaates* (Köln, 1986), pp. 150–53; Sebastian Kubon, *Die Außenpolitik des Deutschen Ordens unter Hochmeister Konrad von Jungingen (1393–1407)* (Göttingen, 2016), pp. 66–123. For slave trade in the region under consideration, see Danuta Quirini-Popławska, *Włoski handel czarnomorskimi niewolnikami w późnym średniowieczu* (Kraków, 2002), pp. 219–22.

<sup>36</sup> Kubon, *Außenpolitik*, p. 99.

<sup>37</sup> The sources on the battle of Vorskla are discussed by Stephen C. Rowell, 'Ne visai primintinos kautynės: ką byloja šaltiniai apie 1399 m. mūšį ties Vorsklos upe', *Istorijos Šaltinių Tyrimai* 1 (2008), 67–89. For more on the battle, see Bertold Spuler, *Die Goldene Horde: Die Mongolen in Rußland 1223–1502* (Leipzig, 1943), pp. 136–40; Robert Frost, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania*, 2 vols (Oxford, 2015), 1: 85–86.

<sup>38</sup> *VMPL* 1, no. 1041, pp. 769–71.

be employed. When relations with their Muscovite neighbours were approaching the point of military confrontation in 1406, both King Vladislas II and Grand Duke Vytautas requested that the pope grant Holy Land plenary indulgences to all warriors who would come to their aid against the infidels or schismatics. The same remission of sins was requested for all those whose bodily strength did not allow them to proceed in person, but who could nevertheless contribute to the common cause in other ways.<sup>39</sup>

The matter was an urgent one. The royal and grand ducal supplicants admitted that they were fighting a defensive war for the sake of the Christian faith but, exposed to the innumerable multitude of the infidels, they were in sore need of strenuous warriors. If Poland and Lithuania failed, God forbid, then all the Christian lands in those parts could easily be destroyed or subjected to perpetual slavery. Thus, the supplication of 1406 provides one of the earliest instances of both Poland and Lithuania acting as a bulwark of Christendom. In their eagerness to enlist foreign aid, Vladislas II Jogaila and Vytautas were following in the footsteps of the Teutonic Knights. Furthermore, of course, they were also quite prepared to cooperate with the order. Early in 1407, news arrived that German 'noble guests' were coming to join Vytautas in his campaign to the Rus lands and the grand duke asked the order's marshal to inform them that he had sent guides to meet them and show them the best way to catch up with his troops should they arrive in Vilnius after his departure to the east.<sup>40</sup> In the end, however, the Teutonic Order came to see all this flurry of activity as in competition with its own enterprise. When the pope inquired as to whether the requested indulgences would jeopardise its privileges, the procurator of the order, unsurprisingly, gave an affirmative answer, and the required grace was withheld.<sup>41</sup> This, of course, did not stop the campaign from taking place anyway.



Fig. 14. An early-fifteenth-century depiction of Vladislas II Jogaila, king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania, as a defender of the faith from the Holy Trinity Chapel in Lublin Castle, Poland. Photo by Dariusz Baronas.

39 GStA PK, XX. HA, OBA 861, fol. 2r.

40 CEV, no. 357, p. 140 (= GStA PK, XX. HA, OBA 962, fol. 2r).

41 BGDO 2, no. 31, pp. 89–60 (14 May [1407]); Ehlers, *Ablaspraxis*, pp. 66–67, 74.



The confrontation between Vytautas of Lithuania and his son-in-law Vasily I of Moscow in 1406–8 was by no means a clear-cut encounter, but resembled rather a knightly tug of war in an attempt to clarify spheres of influence in Smolensk, Chernihiv, Ryazan and the upper reaches of the River Oka.<sup>42</sup>

Following the Battle of Tannenberg, Poland and Lithuania reached the pinnacle of their power and prestige on the European stage, while the Teutonic Order was forced into a defensive position.<sup>43</sup> In 1411, Grand Master Henry of Plauen informed Western potentates of his anxiety about the Ottoman and Golden Horde envoys who had come to negotiate with Jogaila and Vytautas.<sup>44</sup> Sometime later, a papal legate and the envoys of King Sigismund arrived in Vilnius.<sup>45</sup> In the same year Polish and Lithuanian rulers mounted a triumphal progress across their Ruthenian dominions to drive home the message of their power and military might.<sup>46</sup> Tensions between Poland, Lithuania and the Teutonic Order were again on the rise. It was perhaps not merely a rhetorical flourish on the part of the Teutonic Knights when they depicted the dire straits they found themselves in by expressing their fears over the upcoming *Reyse* from the east. The grand master was alarmed that Vytautas could not only bring together all the Ruthenians against his Order, but could also call on 'guests' to support him.<sup>47</sup> The good working relationships which Vytautas enjoyed with Orthodox Christians and mostly Islamised Mongols/Tatars of the Golden Horde could hardly have impinged negatively on his authority and fame. Like Vladislav II, Vytautas took care to have a papal permit for the mass to be celebrated even when Orthodox believers were in attendance.<sup>48</sup> This was meant to be beneficial for the increase in the numbers of faithful believers. Vytautas also took care to be allowed to have mass celebrated in his presence even before dawn, thus receiving the same privilege which the Teutonic Order had obtained long ago to meet the spiritual needs of its troops wading through the lands of pagans and schismatics.<sup>49</sup>

One of the biggest public fora in the later Middle Ages was provided by the Council of Constance (1414–18). This provided a good occasion for both Jogaila and Vytautas, for Poles and Lithuanians alike, to present their Christian credentials in the best possible light. They strove to show that they could succeed where

42 On the war of 1406–8, see Roman A. Besspalov, 'Литовско-московские отношения 1392–1408 годов в связи со смоленской, черниговской и рязанской политикой Витовта и Василия I', *Средневековая Русь* 12 (2016), 129–82; Nikodem, *Witold*, pp. 229–42.

43 William Urban, *Tannenberg and After: Lithuania, Poland and the Teutonic Order in Search of Immortality* (Chicago, IL, 2002).

44 *CEV*, no. 477, pp. 223–24.

45 *LUB* 1/4, no. 1888, cols 779–80.

46 Giedrė Mickūnaitė, *Making a Great Ruler: Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania* (Budapest, 2006), pp. 31–33.

47 *CEV*, no. 543, p. 262 (May, 1413); *LUB* 1/4, no. 1938, cols 848–49 (1 May 1413).

48 Permission granted to Jogaila: *AAV*, RA 122A, fol. 50v (06 November 1404). Further copies have been preserved in RA 119, fols 178v, 183v, 189v. Permission granted to Vytautas: *AAV*, RS 116, fol. 212v. Published in part in *BP* 4, no. 327, p. 60 (27 August 1418).

49 *CDP* 3, no. 96, pp. 126–27 (1368).

the Teutonic Order had failed, namely in the conversion of the Samogitians, who inhabited the last pagan enclave in Europe, surrounded on all sides by Christian dominions. However, the issue of reclaiming Samogitia into the Lithuanian fold was subordinated to far greater concerns, namely the union between the Latin and Greek Church. In this light, both Jogaila and Vytautas could be seen as significant players on the international stage, where the necessity of stemming the Ottoman tide and bringing about a union between Christians of the Latin and Greek rites were burning issues. At this time their influence could be felt from Moscow to Constance and from Constance to Constantinople.<sup>50</sup>

Both of them seemed to be concerned over the fate of Constantinople, where the grand-daughter of Vytautas, Anna, was married to the heir-apparent John Palaiologos.<sup>51</sup> In 1415, King Vladislas II Jogaila sent a shipment of grain to the impoverished city at the Bosphorus.<sup>52</sup> The efforts of Jogaila and Vytautas to play an active role did not go unnoticed. Council fathers urged them to fight against the infidel Ottoman Turks and Golden Horde Tatars and the heretical Bohemians.<sup>53</sup> In 1417, Sigismund of Luxemburg, as king of Hungary (since 1387) and king of the Romans (since 1411), asked for Jogaila's mediation to determine whether a truce could be concluded with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>54</sup> In 1418, Pope Martin V reconfirmed his papal blessing for the military actions if they were to be undertaken by Vladislas II or Vytautas against the 'barbaric tribes' for the sake of the propagation of the Christian faith.<sup>55</sup> Soon afterwards, both of them were accorded the dignity of vicars general *in temporalibus* of the Holy See in the Rus lands of Novgorod and Pskov.<sup>56</sup>

Something serious was clearly afoot in 1420–21, when the Franco-Flemish knight Ghillebert of Lannoy, acting as Anglo-French ambassador, was criss-crossing the lands of Eastern Europe and the Middle East, and when the map of Constantinople made by the Italian scholar and traveller Cristoforo Buondelmonti was dispatched to Vytautas.<sup>57</sup> In 1420, the Byzantine envoy Manuel

<sup>50</sup> Baronas and Rowell, *The Conversion*, pp. 328, 366–78. On church union, see also Darius Baronas, 'King Ladislas II Jogaila of Poland, Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania and the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Church Union', in *Unions and Divisions: New Forms of Rule in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, ed. Paul Srodecki, Norbert Kersken and Rimvydas Petrauskas (London, 2023), pp. 237–47.

<sup>51</sup> Oskar Halecki, 'La Pologne et l'Empire Byzantin', *Byzantion* 7 (1932), 51–53; Igor P. Medvedev, 'Русская княжна на византийском троне', *Вопросы Истории* 2 (1995), 144–47; Baronas and Rowell, *The Conversion*, pp. 366–77.

<sup>52</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, ed. Jan Dąbrowski et al., [11 vols] (Warszawa, 1964–2005), [8]: bk 11, pp. 54–55.

<sup>53</sup> BP 3, nos 1477, 1481–84, p. 236–37. Jorg K. Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund: Herrscher an der Schwelle zur Neuzeit, 1368–1437* (München, 1996), pp. 241–42.

<sup>54</sup> CESDQ 1, no. 48, pp. 42–43; Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund*, pp. 241–42.

<sup>55</sup> BP 4, nos 272–73, p. 50 (4 May 1418).

<sup>56</sup> VMPL 2, no. 25–26, pp. 20–22 (13 May 1418).

<sup>57</sup> Oskar Halecki, 'Gilbert de Lannoy and His Discovery of East Central Europe', *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America* 2 (1944), 324–29; Giuseppe Ragone, 'Il 'Liber insularum



Philantropenos attended the court of Vytautas in Novgorodok (mod. Navahrudak, Belarus) at the same time that the Moscow-based Metropolitan Photius of Kiev and All Rus was also present.<sup>58</sup> The following year, King Vladislas II asked the pope to grant indulgences for a *passagium generale* against the Ottoman Turks and Tatars of the Golden Horde.<sup>59</sup> Before anything tangible could be put into effect, however, Murad II laid siege to Constantinople in 1422. Outside help was not forthcoming, and the Greeks attributed their deliverance to the intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>60</sup> As the imminent danger evaporated, so too did the immediate cause for contemplating a crusade to save Constantinople.

Even though the capital of the Byzantine Empire and the Black Sea coast remained within the sphere of vested interests of Vytautas, his final years were absorbed by concerns closer to hand.<sup>61</sup> The years 1426–28 witnessed distant campaigns towards Pskov, Ryazan, and Novgorod.<sup>62</sup> The grand duke of Lithuania strove to attract volunteer knights, mostly Poles and Germans, to his expeditions.<sup>63</sup> The campaign of summer 1427 amounted essentially to a demonstration of power — visiting the easternmost lands within his reach, Vytautas would accept homage and gifts from Ruthenian dukes based in the upper reaches of the River Oka. The following year he achieved a logistical feat when his troops penetrated deep into the Novgorodian marshland and lay siege to the town of Porkhov. To rescue the situation, the townspeople and their Novgorodian masters had to pay a substantial contribution, just as the Pskovians had done in 1426. Vytautas left, but memories of the campaigns lingered on and, more than a century later, it was still possible to find crosses erected during his campaigns to Novgorod and Moscow on the banks of the Western Dvina (Latv. and Latg. Daugava).<sup>64</sup> In Lithuania, such crosses appeared to underline the Christian character of a newly-converted country.<sup>65</sup> Those on the way to Novgorod and Moscow may have served as signs of a Roman Catholic host reaching out to their schismatic enemy. However, it may also be that the papal blessing of 1418 was then still in force.

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archipelagi' di Cristoforo dei Buondelmonti: filologia del testo, filologia dell'immagine', in *Humanisme et Culture Géographique à l'Époque du Concile de Constance: Autour de Guillaume Fillastre*, ed. Didier Marcotte (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 211–14.

<sup>58</sup> 'Супрасльський список', in *PSRL* 17: 58–59; 'Уваровский список', in *PSRL* 17: 109; Oskar Halecki, *From Florence to Brest (1439–1596)* (Rome, 1958), pp. 30–35; John W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391–1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (New Brunswick, 1969), p. 338.

<sup>59</sup> *BP* 4, no. 879, p. 163.

<sup>60</sup> *Ioannis Canani de Constantinopolitana obsidione relatio*, ed. Andrea Massimo Cuomo (Boston, 2016), pp. 39–42. For the geneal context, see Nevra Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire* (Cambridge, 2009), esp. pp. 184–232.

<sup>61</sup> On the expedition of Vytautas to the Black Sea coast in February 1427, see Darius Baronas, 'Vytautas — žvejys: Simbolinės komunikacijos reikšmės politiniam procesui klausimu', *Istorijos šaltinių tyrimai* [upcoming volume — in print].

<sup>62</sup> Nikodem, *Witold*, pp. 245–49.

<sup>63</sup> *CEV*, no. 1235–36, pp. 732–34; Petrauskas, 'Knighthood', p. 48.

<sup>64</sup> *LM* 37, p. 182.

<sup>65</sup> *Lites* 2/2, no. 32, p. 154.

## The Ebb and Flow of Religious Fervour

Back in 1415, both Vladislas II Jogaila and Vytautas were seeking to create a sense of urgency by sharing with the fathers of the Council of Constance their apprehension that their successors might lose religious fervour.<sup>66</sup> They proved to have been largely correct, even if they could not have foreseen future events. Following the death of Vytautas and the troublesome reign of Jogaila's brother Švitrigaila (1430–32), the country was plunged into an internecine war between Sigismund Kęstutaitis (r. 1432–40), brother of Vytautas, and the dethroned Švitrigaila.<sup>67</sup> Lithuanian participation in the crusading movement was therefore out of the question. Even after the accession of Casimir, son of Vladislas II Jogaila, to the grand ducal throne (1440–92), these kinds of activities still had to wait for a good while.<sup>68</sup> In 1445, looking back to the time of Jogaila and Vytautas, Bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki of Cracow came close to referring to it as a golden age.<sup>69</sup> The time when Polish and Lithuanian rulers could threaten the Ottoman Empire with reprisals was well and truly over. When Catholic Europe sprang into hectic action following the fall of Constantinople, seeking to find a way to stop the advance of the Ottomans, the new king of Poland Casimir IV (r. 1447–92) certainly fell in line with the rest by demonstrating his full appreciation of the necessity of reconquering Constantinople and redeeming the shame inflicted on the Christians. At the same time, however, he was frank enough to admit that he did not have enough resources to stand up to the dual enemy — the Ottoman Turks and the Tatars.<sup>70</sup> The popes proved much more enthusiastic, and their initiatives to stir Christians into action also reached the Lithuanian Catholics.<sup>71</sup> Pope Sixtus IV called on King Casimir IV and his subjects to contribute their share to the beleaguered Knights of Rhodes in 1479–80 and to join the anti-Ottoman

66 BAV, Vat. Lat. 4.178 I, fols 264v–267v (17 October 1415); CEV, no. 651, p. 332 (18 October 1415).

67 The most comprehensive treatment of the troubled period of the 1430s is provided by Sergey V. Polekhov, *Наследники Витовта: Династическая война в Великом Княжестве Литовском в 30-е годы XV века* (Moskva, 2015).

68 The participation of individual knights from the grand duchy of Lithuania in the struggle against the Ottoman Turks and Golden Horde Tatars should not be excluded outright. The 1440s brought forth the first, and thus far only known person originating from the vast lands of the grand duchy of Lithuania in the fifteenth century to have explicitly been granted the epithet 'knight of God' — the Volhynian nobleman Peter of Kremenets: *LM* 3, p. 63. The title 'Божий рыцарь' may signify either crusading or pilgrimage to the Holy Land: Petrauskas, 'Knighthood', p. 53.

69 *CESDQ* 1.1, no. 5, pp. 10–11 (to Bishop Matthew of Vilnius, 1445).

70 *CESDQ* 1.2, no. 137, pp. 150–51 (oration of Jan Lutkowiec z Brzezia at the 1454 diet in Ratisbon).

71 *VMPL* 2, no. 156, p. 113 (Pope Callixtus III to the archbishop of Gniezno and the bishops of Chelmno and Vilnius, 4 April 1457), no. 239, p. 219 (papal injunction to Friars Minor in the province of Poland to preach *cruciatam* against the Turks, 7 November 1482), no. 243, p. 220 (Bartholomew of Camerino commended to the king to preach *sanctam cruciatam*, 10 December, 1482), no. 262, pp. 234–40 (brief of the crusade against the Turks and Tatars, 5 July 1486), no. 360, pp. 327–29 (papal exhortation to join the crusade against the Turks, 28 July 1509): Rita R. Trimonienė, 'Kryžiaus karų idėja', pp. 224–32.





crusade after Otranto had been liberated in 1481.<sup>72</sup> The popes urged Casimir and his son Alexander, grand duke of Lithuania (1492–1506) and king of Poland (1501–06), to send their envoys to discuss the crusade against the Ottomans in 1484, 1489, and 1499.<sup>73</sup> In the end it was not so much the popes, but the ever increasing pressure of the Ottoman Empire in the Black Sea region that prompted resistance and the revival and spread of crusading modes of communication.

One of the earliest examples provided by the Lithuanian nobility is strange. Safely ensconced some eighty kilometres north of Vilnius, the lord lieutenant of Kaunas, Stankus Sudivojaitis, re-founded the parochial church in his patrimonial village of Deltuva. He requested and was granted an indulgence of seven years for visitors to the church. Perhaps in order to smooth the path for obtaining this grace he had not only depicted his milieu as heavily infested with Tatars and pagans, but also confessed himself to be a fresh convert who *pro fide christiana continue fortiter debellat*.<sup>74</sup> The younger son and namesake of King Casimir and future Catholic saint, Prince Casimir (1458–84) was clear about the need to do battle with the Ottomans and held his royal uncle Vladislav of Varna in high esteem.<sup>75</sup> In 1484, the captain of Samogitia, Jonas Kęsgailaitis, declared his readiness to join the Teutonic Order in the fight against the infidels since he was alarmed at how badly Christendom had recently been weakened.<sup>76</sup> A curious example of the Lithuanian interest in the pan-European phenomenon of crusades is a 1465 letter from the Georgian king Constantine II to Queen Isabella of Castile — its translation into Ruthenian was included in 1496 among the files of the grand ducal archive.<sup>77</sup>

The Lithuanian ruling elite proved to be active in 1495 when plans to retake the Moldavian ports of Cetatea Albă (mod. Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiy, Ukraine; Turk. Akkerman) and Chilia (mod. Kiliya, Ukraine; Turk. Kilya) from Ottoman rule were being hatched.<sup>78</sup> However, although Grand Duke Alexander, after expelling the Tatars from southern Volhynia at the end of July and later moving to Izyaslav and Vinnytsya in August and September 1497, manoeuvred with his army not far away from the Moldavian border, the majority of Lithuanian troops did not join the simultaneous Polish campaign against the Moldavian voivode Stephen III the Great. Warned by the Muscovite grand prince Ivan III who, through his diplomats, emphasised the ‘unity’ between Moscow and Suceava due to dynastic connections, Alexander contented himself with sending smaller

72 *EFE* 64, no. 60, pp. 35–36 (21 October 1479), no. 63, pp. 38–39 (18 October 1480), no. 66, pp. 41–42 (18 September 1481), no. 105, pp. 57–58 (10 January 1483).

73 *VMPL* 2, no. 282, p. 251 (7 December 1489), no. 295, pp. 266–67 (1499). Papal-Polish relations at the time are analysed in detail by Janusz Smołucha, *Papiestwo a Polska w latach 1484–1526: Kontakty dyplomatyczne na tle zagrożenia tureckiego* (Kraków, 1999), pp. 28–90.

74 *Kodeks dyplomatyczny katedry i diecezji wileńskiej*, ed. Jan Fijałek and Władysław Semkowicz, 1 vol. (Kraków, 1932–48), p. 301 (4 March 1469); Baronas and Rowell, *The Conversion*, p. 413.

75 Rowell, ‘Lietuva — krikščionybės pylimas?’, p. 23.

76 Petrauskas, ‘Knighthood’, p. 53.

77 *LM* 5: 397–98; Rowell, ‘Lietuva — krikščionybės pylimas?’, pp. 28–29.

78 Trimonienė, ‘Kryžiaus karų idėja’, p. 229.



contingents of a few thousand volunteers under the command of Stanislovas Kiška, the later grand Lithuanian hetman, in the autumn of the same year. They arrived too late to make any difference in the Polish defeat in the battle of Cosmin Forest 26 October 1497.<sup>79</sup> Defence became the top priority, rather than aggressive campaigning abroad. Starting from the last decade of the fifteenth century, Lithuania found herself exposed to a war of attrition conducted by the Crimean Tatars and the ever more self-assertive Muscovy. Despite huge territorial losses culminating in the Muscovite capture of Smolensk in 1514, the Lithuanian political nation eventually managed to stand its ground.<sup>80</sup> The resounding victory of the allied forces of the grand duchy of Lithuania and the kingdom of Poland achieved at the Battle of Orsha (8 September 1514) was not only exploited to the full by the Jagiellonian dynasty's Europe-wide propaganda to drive home the message about the danger posed by schismatic Muscovy, but also served as a source of jubilation for those Orthodox believers to whom the grand duchy of Lithuania was their only native country.<sup>81</sup> The crusading idiom expressed in terms of fighting the infidel and schismatic alike had a share in the process of bringing Lithuanian Roman Catholic and Rus Orthodox closer together without doing away with their differences or putting aside differences of opinion.

## Concluding Thoughts

The reigns of Jogaila and Vytautas represent the period when Lithuanians came to be seen as an integral part of Western Christendom. The transformation from being crusaded against to joining the crusader movement can well be demonstrated through recourse to Philippe de Mézières: in one part of his *Le songe du vieil pelerin* Lithuania is still described as a porch of Tartary but, later on, the Lithuanian ruler's conversion is depicted as having brought 'much fame to the Christian faith' and that his forces may participate in the salvage operation of Constantinople.<sup>82</sup> The late medieval Lithuanian military campaigns never ventured overseas or to faraway lands. Lithuanian rulers and their noble elite were almost exclusively concerned with affairs closer to home and with what they perceived to be the genuine interests of their grand duchy. Their crusading was a short-range

79 Natalia Nowakowska, 'Poland and the Crusade in the reign of king Jan Olbracht, 1492–1501', in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century: Message and Impact*, ed. Norman Housley (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 128–47; Fryderyk Papée, *Jan Olbracht* (Kraków, 2006), pp. 125–46.

80 The process of social and political integration in the face of Muscovite aggression has been analysed by Mikhail M. Krom, *Меж Русью и Литвой: Пограничные земли в системе русско-литовских отношений конца XV — первой трети XVI в.* (Moskva, 1995, 2nd edition 2010).

81 Mintautas Čiurinskas, 'Karas ir kultūra Lietuvos Didžiojoje Kunigaikštystėje: 1514 metai', *Senoji Lietuvos literatūra* 31 (2011), 127–58; Stephen C. Rowell, 'War and Piety in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Late Middle Ages', *RL* 2 (2016), 13–14.

82 Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, ed. George W. Coopland, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1969), 1: 235, 2: 100, 427.



affair. In their appropriation of the political language of the time, Lithuanians and their rulers proved to be capable learners. They were masters of the art of politics to the point of being able to take even the pope aback, as was the case in 1422 when Martin V expressed his dismay at Vytautas' claim that it was on the orders of the pope that he had dealings with ... Bohemian heretics!<sup>83</sup> In many other cases they would tell their intended audience (Western crusade-minded nobility) what they wanted to hear. In the end, all this political activity and real military enterprise brought much fame to Lithuania under Vytautas. In 1429, Francesco de Comitibus Aquae Vivaee heaped praise on Vytautas by declaring that he could not only overwhelm the Ottoman Turks but also liberate Jerusalem itself.<sup>84</sup> Sigismund of Luxemburg claimed that Vytautas must be crowned king of Lithuania in recognition of his role in defence of the Christian faith — his country being held up as a shield of the Christians.<sup>85</sup> Even though such full-blown rhetoric never seems to have been repeated from abroad, Lithuanians did gain great fame for their military prowess and as potential crusaders, and this state of affairs can be illustrated by reference to the post-Byzantine historian Laonikos Chalkokondyles. In his eyes, 'this race seems to be the greatest among the peoples around this land and the most courageous, and they fight against Prussians, Germans, and Poles regarding the boundaries of their country. This race too has adopted the customs and way of life of the Romans but its dress is similar to that of the Russians. It borders for the most part on Moldavia and fights against its people.'<sup>86</sup> This was put down in writing in the 1460s, long after the days of Lithuanian military glory were over, but the image remained. And as we all know, it is the image that often carries more weight than down-to-earth statements and conclusions.

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83 *UBGH* 1, no. 186, pp. 203–4 (Pope Martin V to King Sigismund of Luxemburg, 21 May 1422).

84 *CEV*, no. 1894, p. 881; Rowell, 'Lietuva — krikščionybės pylimas?', p. 22.

85 Srodecki, *Antemurale*, pp. 128–29.

86 Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *The Histories*, trans. Anthony Kaldellis, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA, 2014), 1: 218. See Baronas, 'Byzantium and Lithuania', pp. 310–14.